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ABSTRACT

Organizational climate refers to workers' perceptions that a given workplace possesses a distinctive atmosphere. Managers appreciate the behavioral implications of this concept, assuming staff performance or well-being might be improved by managing the climate. Attempts to manipulate organizational climate have generally been unsuccessful, and the theory itself contains awkward contradictions. This paper carefully defines organizational climate, discusses attempts to create measures for the concept, and explores major difficulties and future research directions. While some instruments proved adequate for the institutions they were designed for, no one has developed a climate inventory with high reliability and validity across many types of organizations. Other validity problems are the following: (1) no relationship between climate and performance has been proven; (2) scant correlation between perceptual and objective measures exists; (3) climate inventories may measure individual, not organizational perceptions; and (4) job satisfaction measures and climate measures often overlap. New studies of climate and technology, physical environment, objective work environment measures, and group norms may prove rewarding. An extensive appendix describes three climate indexes for school use, highlighting measurement inadequacy. Evidence does show a positive correlation between student achievement and school environment. Included are 39 references. (MLH)

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ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE: Fact or Fantasy?

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January 1984

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INTRODUCTION

Organisation Climate is a concept derived from the common experience of people that there is a different atmosphere or feeling in the organisations where they work or visit which differentiate them from each other. Such distinctive atmosphere was labelled Organisation Climate. As a concept it seemed to offer something of value to managers, because if as was assumed people's behaviour in an organisation was affected by its climate then it should be possible to improve performance and/or the well-being of the staff by managing the climate. This promise has not been realised. There have been considerable difficulties in using the concept in practice and analysis of its theory has exposed a number of awkward contradictions. This paper firstly defines organisation climate and then considers some of the major contradictions and difficulties.

What is Organisation Climate?

A typical definition, taken from the many that have been written, is that of Tagiuri and Litwin.

> "Organisational Climate is a relatively enduring quality of the internal environment of an organisation that (a) is experienced by its members, (b) influences their behaviour and (c) can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics or attributes of the organisation" (Tagiuri and Litwin, 1968).

We can list the characteristics of organisational climate as:-

1. Although it is not unchanging, it has an air of permanence or at least of continuity over time.

2. It has some element of reality so that people can agree about what it is and share their experiences of it. It is this commonality of perception which distinguishes it from such individual experiences as job satisfaction.

3. The climate of an organisation is perceived and interpreted by individuals.

4. It has the strange characteristic that although phenomenologically it is external to the individual, yet cognitively it is internal to the extent that it is affected by individual perception.

5. It impacts on the behaviour of people in the organisation though there is no agreement among researchers as to whether it is a direct or indirect determinant, or indeed whether climate is only a predictor in the correlative sense and there are no casual relationships.

There have been a number of attempts to devise measures for organisational climate. Among the more widely-used of such instruments are the following:

1. Halpin and Croft's Organisation Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ), designed to be used with school systems (Halpin and Croft, 1968). This instrument is described in some detail in Appendix A at the end of this paper.

2. Friedlander and Margulies' revision of the OCDQ for use in hospitals and R and D organisations (Friedlander and Margulies, 1969).

Cont'd/...

3. Likert's POC classification devised to be used with his four systems of management. A Profile of a School (POS) questionnaire was developed in 1968 from his earlier work on industrial organisations. (Likert 1967. Likert and Likert 1976).

4. Litwin and Stringer's OCQ devised for use in business organisations but also used in hospitals and public utilities. (Litwin and Stringer, 1968).

5. Payne and Pheysey's BOCI (Payne and Pheysey, 1971) which is a redesigned version of Stern's Organisational Climate Index (Stern, 1966), and was designed for use in business organisations.

6. Schneider and Bartletts ACQ designed specifically for use in insurance agencies. (Schneider and Bartlett, 1968).

Litwin and Stringers' OCQ is derived from the motivational theories of McClelland (McClelland, 1951) and Atkinson (Atkinson, 1964), and that of payne and phesey from Murray's needs-press theory (Murray, 1938). There are other indexes on the market, including one being developed for schools by NFER, but the above named are the most common in use.

However well these various instruments have measured climate in the types of organisations for which they were devised, none of them has been satisfactorily extended to other types of organisations. No one has yet developed a climate inventory that has high validity and reliability across many different types of organisation.

Apart from that, the manager has to take concern of three problems which are proving intractable in the use of climate as a concept. Each of these is now discussed in turn.

The Relationship of Climate and Performance

From the managers' point of view, there is not much use in climate measures if there is no apparent relationship between climate and performance. There is no way in which knowledge about the climate can then be used in management decisions. As yet no such relationship has been firmly established. A major review of a number of studies concluded that no consistent relationship could be found (Hellriegel and Slocum, 1974). One writer has more recently argued that these negative findings arise from the research assumption that there is only one climate in an organisation. If there is more than one, then the averaging of individuals' perceptions reduces a score that is not necessarily representative either of the organisation or any particular work group (Johnston, 1976). At the present time, there is no agreement as to whether the work performance of an individual or a group is directly affected by the climate in which they operate.

The Distinction Between Perceptual and Objective Measures

Perceptual measures of climate are those obtained from individuals by asking for their personal perceptions of organisational events and characteristics. They are subjective measures and record how people feel about the organisation. Objective measures list undisputed facts about the organisation - work schedules, physical provision, ratio of supervisors to workers etc. Both are ways of obtaining information about organisational

climate. If they are valid ways, then there should be high correlation between the two measures when they are both used in the same organisation. If there is no such correlation, then we must assume that perceptual measures are describing something different from objective measures. This is as yet an unresolved issue, although a review of a number of studies of school systems by Payne and Pugh concluded that such correlation does exist (Payne and Pugh, 1976).

What Do Perceptual Measures Measure

A crucial question for the manager is whether climate as measured by the perceptions of members of the organisation is telling him something about the individuals or something about the organisation. Guion argues that "the idea of 'perceived organisational climate' seems ambiguous: one cannot be sure whether it implies an attribute of the organisation or of the perceiving individual". (Guion, 1973).

James and Jones approached the problem by an attempted reconceptualisation (James and Jones, 1974). They wanted a distinction made between 'organisational cimate' which is regarded as an organisational attribute, and 'psychological climate' which is regarded as an individual attribute. However this only makes sense in the practical situation if the two climates are different, and that is what the disagreement is about. In an attempt to reach a conclusion, Drexter studied 21 organisations with 1,256 work groups and 6,996 individuals, and concluded that the perceptually generated description of organisations by individuals did describe organisational attributes and not sub-groups or individual attributes. (Drexter, 1977). However, a micro-study by Johnston established that the perceptions of individuals varied according to the length of time they had been with the firm, and concluded that organisational climate is "a joint function of situation and personality attributes". The debate carries on.

What is the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organisational Climate?

The three questions we have considered come together in considering the controversy concerning the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational climate.

One study took the view that perceptual climate measures were in fact measuring the same constructs as job satisfaction, leadership scores, role conflict and role ambiguity (House and Rizzo, 1972). Guion argued that a study of 76 managers by Pritchard and Karasick (Pritchard and Karasick, 1973) showed clearly that perceived climate is identical with employee attitude or job satisfaction. "Job satisfaction measured by one method is a function of job satisfaction measured by another". To reinforce this finding, Johannesson discovered that there was substantial overlap when he administered organisational climate items and work attitude items, and indeed suggested that many climate researchers had simply borrowed items for their questionnaires from old job satisfaction instruments. (Johannesson, 1973).

Cont'd/...

On the other hand, Lafollette and Sims specifically tested out Johannesson's thesis and could not establish any considerable degree of overlap, and concluded that perceived organisational climate is something different from job satisfaction (Lafollette and Sims, 1975), and their position has been supported by some other research. In an attempt to resolve this dispute Schneider and Snyder carried out a major investigation. What they discovered was that:

> Climate and satisfaction measures correlated for some people and not for others;
>
> People agreed more on the climate of their organisation than they did on their job satisfaction;
>
> Two satisfaction measures used correlated more with each other than with a measure of climate;
>
> None of them strongly correlated with job performance.

Their conclusion was that there is an empirical as well as a theoretical distinction between organisational climate and job satisfaction. This distinction only holds however if the following conceptualisations are held:

> organisational climate is a characteristic of the organisation which is reflected in the descriptions employees make of the policies, practices, and conditions which exist in the work environment;
>
> job satisfaction is an affective response of individuals which is reflected on the evaluations employees make of all the individually salient aspects of their job and the organisation for which they work.

Nevertheless the relationship of the two is still an open question, and more research is needed to resolve the dispute definitively.

Some New Initiatives

Given the present response, it is unsurprising that attempts are being made to look for new directions for research. Four of these are as follows:

1. A study of the relationship between organisational climate and technology. The assumption here is that climate is determined significantly by the technology. If we use Woodward's terminology, the climate of a small-batch production organisation would be different from a mass production or process production organisation (Woodward, 1965). Peterson has used this approach in his study of 18 Norwegian firms (Peterson, 1975).

2. A study of the relationship between organisational climate and physical environment - the sociophysical aprroach (Steele, 1973) or the concept of ecological psychology (Barker, 1968). The assumption is that Climate is significantly determined by the physical setting since physical setting is known to influence behaviour. Of course, over time the climate may modify the environment and the physical setting reflect the climate of the organisation.

3. A study of the relationship between organisational climate and objective measures of the work environment - job design, work restructuring, socio-technical systems, behavioural descriptions of critical contents, labour disputes, accidents, etc.

4. A study of the relationship between organisational climate and group norms. The assumption is that evaluation based on group norms are related to climate. Jackson's Return Potential Model enables a quantitative measure of a group norm in a field situation to be recorded, and the intensity and pattern of group norms can be plotted across work groups and organisations, and correlated with measures of organisational climate. (Jackson, 1965).

Conclusion

We can draw three conclusions from the discussion in this paper:

1. There are some difficult theoretical problems in the concept of organisational climate to solve.

2. There is a major problem about the validity of the measurement of organisational climate.

3. Nevertheless it is a concept that has some meaning for and is therefore attractive to managers. Even if it is at present methodologically unsound, it is something that managers claim they can recognise and experience. This in itself suggests that further research and experiment in the area is worthwhile.

In the appendix that follows we look at some work on the application of climate to schools and colleges. Firstly we look at three instruments devised for measuring climate, and then some research on the relationship between climate and performance.

APPENDIX IBN: 1848

A.W. Halpins Organisation Climate Index

One of the most popular instruments for investigating organisational climate in colleges and schools is that developed by Andrew Halpin and Don Croft. It is described in 'The Organisational Climate of Schools' (Change: Midwest Administration Centre, University of Chicago, 1963) and an abridged version is in Halpins book, 'Theory and Research in Administration' (New York: MacMillan, 1966).

The research involved the construction of over 1,000 items used in a great many schools and with many hundreds of staff. The final version of the Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) contained only 64 of these items. Each item is in the form of a statement of which the following are typical examples:

"Teachers ramble when they talk at faculty meetings"

"The Principal corrects teachers mistakes"

"Teachers leave the building as soon as possible at day's end"

Respondents are required to indicate the extent to which each statement is true of their school, using the following four categories:

1. Rarely occurs
2. Sometimes occurs
3. Often occurs
4. Very frequently occurs.

Halpin and Croft in their preliminary field studies identified eight dimensions of organisational climate, and the final version of the OCDQ is composed of eight subtests corresponding with these dimensions. These dimensions fall into two sections, four concerned with teacher's behaviour and four concerned with principal's behaviour.

Teacher's Behaviour

1. Disengagement: This refers to the teacher's tendency to be withdrawn, lacking involvement, going through the motions.

2. Hindrance: This refers to the teacher's feeling that they are burdened with a lot of unnecessary trivia that gets in the way of their real work - demands by the Principal for committee meetings, statistics etc.

3. Esprit: This is another word for morale. The feeling among teachers that they are doing a good job and their social needs are also being satisfied in the process.

4. Intimacy: This refers to the teachers' enjoyment of friendly social relations with each other, outside consideration of the tasks they do.

Principal's Behaviour

5. Aloofness: This refers to formal, impersonal behaviour by the Principal. It is reflected in emotional distance from the staff, or concentration on the rule book.

6. Production Emphasis: This refers to behaviour by the Principal characterised by close supervision of the staff. He is very directive and communications tend to be one way only.

7. Thrust: This is characterised by the highly energetic Principal who tries to get his staff moving by his own activity and example, and who never asks them to work harder than he himself does.

8. Consideration: This refers to the Principal's concern for his staff, and his efforts to treat them considerately.

Further factorial analysis showed that there were three higher order factors:

Social Needs - a factor which seemed to reflect individual's relations to other individuals. Sub-factors Intimacy and Consideration load heavily on this.

Esprit - this seems to describe the behaviour of the group qua group. Sub factors Esprit and Thrust load heavily on this, and Disengagement and Hindrance load negatively.

Social Control - a factor concerned with the exercise of social control by the leader, and which loads heavily on Aloofness and Production Emphasis.

So we have an individual factor, a group factor, and a leader factor.

Halpin and Croft devised six prototype school profiles of organisational climate based on their field work and the patterns of responses to the six sub-factors and three higher order factors. They describe these six climates as follows.

The Open Climate

This scores low on Disengagement, Hindrance, Aloofness and Production Emphasis, high on Esprit and Thrust, neutral on Intimacy. "The teachers work well together without bickering .. are not burdened by mountains of busy work or routine reports: the principals policies facilitate the teachers' accomplishment of their tasks ... group members enjoy friendly relations with one another, but ... no need for an extremely high degree of intimacy ... obtain considerable job satisfaction and are sufficiently motivated to overcome difficulties and frustrations. The Principal ... not only does he set an example by working hard himself but depending on the situation he can either criticise the action of teachers or go out of his way to help ... he possesses the personal flexibility to be genuine whether he is required to control and direct ... or show compassion in satisfying the social needs of teachers. He has integrity ... he is not aloof nor are the rules and procedures he sets up impersonal or inflexible.

Nonetheless the rules and regulations ... provide him with subtle direction and control ... he does not have to emphasise production nor ... monitor the teachers activities closely because the teachers produce easily and freely. He does not do all the work himself ... he has the ability to let appropriate leadership acts emerge from the teachers."

The Autonomous Climate

This scores highly on Intimacy, Esprit, Aloofness and Thrust, low on Disengagement, Hindrance, Production Emphasis, neutral on Consideration.

"The distinguishing feature is the almost complete freedom the Principal gives to teachers to provide their own structures - for interaction so that they can find ways within the group of satisfying their social needs.

When teachers are together in a task-orientated situation - they reach their goals easily and quickly - the teachers do work well together and accomplish the tasks of the organisation. They are not hindered by administrative paper work ... the Principal has set up procedures and regulations to facilitate the teachers task. The morale of teachers is high, though not as high as in the Open Climate ... it stems largely from the social needs satisfaction which the teachers receive.

The Principal remains aloof from the teachers for he runs the organisation in a businesslike and a rather impersonal manner - favours the establishment of procedures - which provide guidelines that the teachers can follow ... does not personally check to see that things are getting done. He does not force people to produce ... instead he appears satisfied to let the teachers work at their own speed: he monitors their activities very little. On the whole he is considerate and he attempts to satisfy the social needs of the teachers as well as most principals do. The Principal ... sets an example by working hard himself".

The Controlled Climate

This is high on Production Emphasis, Hindrance, and Aloofness, and to a lesser extent on Esprit: Low on Disengagement, Intimacy and Consideration: Neutral on Thrust.

"This is marked above everything else by a press for achievement at the expense of social-needs satisfaction. Everyone works hard and there is little time for friendly relations ... or deviations from established controls and directives ...Nonetheless since morale is high this climate can be classified as more Opened than Closed.

The teachers are completely engaged in the task. They do not bicker, find fault, or differ with the principal's directives. They are there to get the job done and they expect to be told personally just how to do it ... an excessive amount of paper work ... which gets in the way of teachers' task accomplishment. Few procedures have been set up to facilitate their work: in fact paper work seems to be used to keep them busy ... teachers have little time to establish very friendly relations ... little feeling of comaraderie. Social isolation is common: there are few genuinely warm relations among the teachers. Esprit, however, is slightly above average.

The Principal is ... dominating and directive. He allows little flexibility ... and insists that everything is done his way. He is somewhat aloof: he prefers to publish directives to indicate how each procedure is to be followed... the Principal becomes dogmatic when members ... do not conform to his views. He cares little about how people feel: the important thing is to get the job done and in his way... He is trying to move the organisation by working hard - he personally sees to it that everything runs properly. He delegates few responsibilities: leadership acts emanate chiefly from himself.

The Familiar Climate

This is high on Disengagement, Intimacy and Consideration: low on Hindrance, Aloofness and Production Emphasis, and neutral on Esprit and Thrust.

"The main feature is the conspicuously friendly manner of both the teachers and the Principal. Social needs satisfaction is very high, while little is done to control or direct the groups activities towards goal achievement The teachers are disengaged and accomplish little ... the principal does not burden the teachers with routine reports: in fact he makes it as easy as possible for them to work. Teachers have established personal friendships among themselves, and socially everyone is part of a big happy family. Morale is average - it stems primarily from social need-satisfaction.

The Principal is reluctant to be anything other than considerate lest he may ... injure the "happy family" feeling. He wants everyone to know that he too is one of the group ... in no way different from anyone else. The Principal is not aloof, and not impersonal or official in his manner. Few rules and regulations are established ... the Principal does not emphasise production, nor do much personally to insure that the teachers are performing their tasks correctly. No one works to capacity, yet no one is ever "wrong"... the actions of members at least in respect to task accomplishment are not criticised ... However teachers do attribute Thrust to the Principal ... but this probably means that they regard him as a "good guy" who is interested in their welfare and who "looks out for them".

The Paternal Climate

This is high on Disengagement, Production Emphasis and Consideration, low on Hindrance, Esprit, Intimacy, Aloofness, and neutral on Thrust.

"This climate is characterised by the ineffective attempts of the principal to control the teachers as well as to satisfy their social needs ... his behaviour is non-genuine and is perceived by the teachers as non-motivating.

The teachers do not work well together: they are split into factions ... Few hindrances burden the teachers in the form of routine reports etc because the Principal does a great deal of this busy work himself. Teachers do not enjoy friendly relationships with each other. Essentially teachers have given up trying: they let the Principal take care of things the best they can. Low Esprit results when teachers obtain inadequate satisfaction in respect to both task-accomplishment and social needs.

The principal is the very opposite of aloof: he is everywhere at once checking, monitoring, and telling people how to do things ... so non-aloof he becomes intrusive. ... He is always emphasising all the things that should be done, but somehow nothing gets done. ... The school and his duties in it are the principal's main interest in life ... He is considerate, but his consideration appears to be seductive over solicitousness rather than a genuine concern for the social needs of others ... he uses this consideration to satisfy his own social needs. Although he preserves an average degree of Thrust he fails to motivate the teachers, primarily because he, as a human being, does not provide an example which the teachers care to emulate.

The Closed Climate

This is high in Disengagement, and fairly high on Hindrance, Intimacy, Aloofness and Production Emphasis. It is low on Esprit, Thrust and Consideration.

This climate marks a situation in which the group members obtain little satisfaction in respect either to task achievement or social needs. The Principal is ineffective in directing the activities of the teachers: at the same time he is not inclined to look out for their personal welfare. The teachers are disengaged and do not work well together ... to secure some sense of achievement, the major outlet for teachers is to complete a variety of reports ... the Principal does not facilitate task accomplishment of teachers. Esprit is at a nadir ... the salient bright spot is that teachers do obtain satisfaction from their friendly relations with other teachers.

The Principal is highly aloof and impersonal in controlling and directing the activities of teachers. He emphasises production and frequently says that "we should work harder". He sets up rules and regulations about how things should be done, and these rules are usually arbitrary. But his words are hollow because he possesses little Thrust and does not motivate teachers by setting a good personal example. What he says and what he does are two different things. ... he can be depicted as inconsiderate ... he expects everyone else to take the initiative yet he does not give them the freedom (to do so) ... he does not provide adequate leadership for the group ... teachers regard him as a "phony".

(extracted and edited from Halpin and Croft op.cit)

Comment

Since first formulating the OCDQ, Halpin and Croft have done further work on it and refined some of the analysis but it has not substantially changed. Because their work still enjoys some popularity it is worth reproducing here, but the following points can be made about it.

1. Although they derive heuristically their climate prototypes and in field work have found they can approximate schools, based on their OCDQ response, to one of the six climates, it is unclear precisely what is being measured. The measure is aggregated from personal responses to the sixty-four items, and these define what it is we are talking about.

2. The items incorporate a number of different kinds of approaches. This is in part deliberate. Halpin and Croft argue for a multi-dimensional model. They have brought in elements from concepts of job satisfaction, from leadership style, from management style (of Likert's four management systems and Blake and Mouton's Management Grid (Blake and Mouton, 1964)and from behavioural analysis).

3. In the typology of organisational concepts, they use a ranking from Open to Closed, distinguishing at the one end functional flexibility and at the other end functional rigidity. The authors accept the value judgement implied in this ranking, but argue that it is based on analysis of behaviour via the sixty-four items, and that the judgement lies in the extent to which an organisation achieves both task accomplishment and social needs satisfaction.

4. The single strongest predictor of organisational climate type is the factor of Esprit which declines steadily through the six types from Open to Closed.

5. They also use the dichotomy of task-centred, person-centred which is at the basis of much subsequent conceptualisation in management theory (e.g. Blake, Fiedler ((Fiedler, Chemers & Mahar, 1976), Reddin (Reddin 1970)).

6. The question is not answered how far this instrument is measuring job satisfaction or some other characteristic than climate: its relationship to effectiveness is deliberately not investigated on the basis that it is doubtful if secure criteria can be established and it is an open question to what extent the perceptual measures that are used are giving information on the respondent or on the organisation.

Stern and Steinhoff's Organisational Climate Index

This approach assumes that what happens in organisations is a result of the interaction between the needs of organisation members and the press or pressure of the relevant environment. Stern had first developed a needs-press approach to colleges, for which he used two questionnaires - the Activities Index (A1) which assessed the need structure of individuals and the College Characteristics Index (CCI) which measured the organisational press as experienced by College members. (Stern 1963). The CCI was adapted by Stern and Steinhoff to schools in the Organisational Climate Index (OCI) and first used in public schools in Syracuse New York in 1965.

(Steinhoff, 1965) The Index consists of a number of simple statements which teachers mark as either true or false for their schools. Examples are:

People here speak up openly and freely

People find others eager to help them get started

Analysis of the data from early studies enabled Stern and Steinhoff to identify six OCI factors, as follows:

Factor 1. Intellectual Climate. Enrionments perceived as being conducive to scholarly interests in the humanities, arts and sciences.

Factor 2. Achievement Standards. Environments perceived to stress high standards of personal achievement. Tasks are successfully completed and high levels of motivation and energy are maintained.

Factor 3. Personal Dignity (Supportiveness) Environments which respect the integrity of the individual and provide a supportive atmosphere for the needs of more dependent members. A sense of fair play and openness.

Factor 4. Organisational Effectiveness Environments that encourage and facilitate the effective performance of tasks.

Factor 5. Orderliness. A press for organisational structure and procedural orderliness - pressures to conform to a defined norm of personal appearance and institutional image.

Factor 6. Impulse Control A great deal of constraint and organisational restrictiveness. Little opportunity for personal expression or any form of impulse behaviour.

A schools development press score is worked out by the sum of the scores of Factors 1, 2 and 3 minus Factor 6.

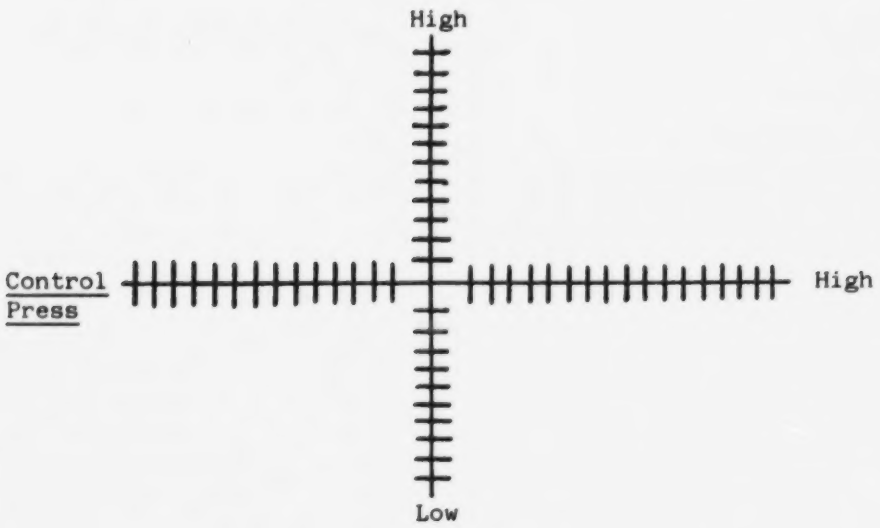
The score for Control press is computed by adding together scores 4 and 5.

Schools high on development press are characterised by organisational environments that emphasise intellectual and interpersonal activities. They are intellectually stimulating, supportive of personal expression and encourage a wide range of behaviour styles.

Schools high on control press are characterised by internal environments emphasising orderliness and structure. Rules, official channels, and approved behaviour tend to be clear cut, narrow and emphasised.

Schools are plotted on the following diagram.

Development Press



Likert's Profile of a School (POS)

Likerts work is in a somewhat different category. He had developed over three decades a distinctive approach to the study of management (Likert, 1967), which resulted in his definition of four types of management system:

System 1 - exploitive-authoritative
System 2 - benevolent-authoritative
System 3 - consultative
System 4 - participative

Each system is described by its performance on six characteristics of the organisation.

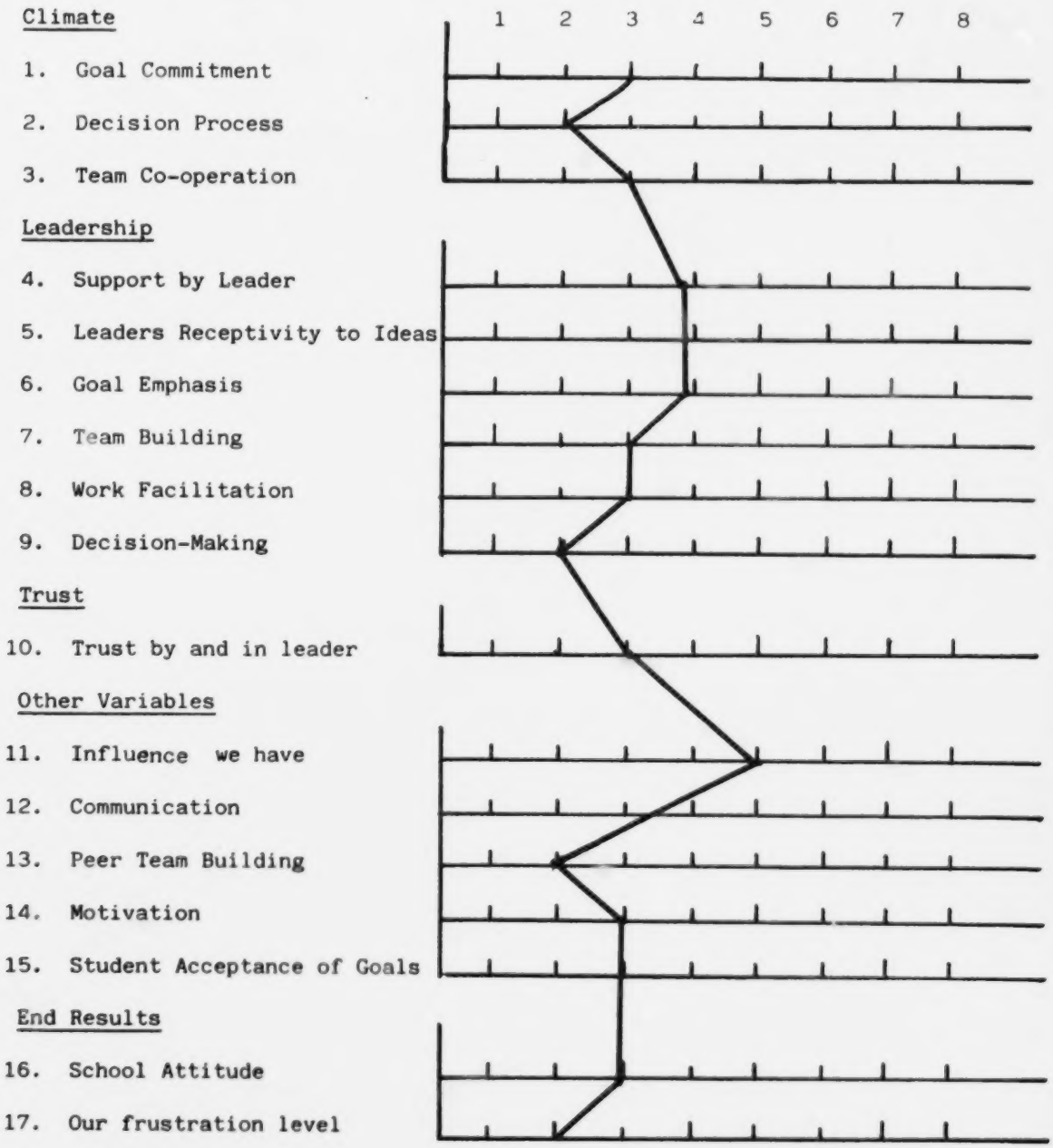
Leadership processes
Motivational forces
Communication processes
Decision-making processes
Goal-setting processes
Control processes

By the use of a Short Management System Questionnaire any organisation can plot its profile in terms of the above characteristics. This has been used for a variety of purposes including team development and other management training programmes.

In 1968 Likert developed questionnaires for use in schools called Profile of a School (POS) (Likert and Likert, 1976). The instrument was intended to be administered not only to teachers but also students, school board members, office staff, and parents so that varying perspectives of the school could be registered. When the results are plotted, the profile

indicates which of the management systems most nearly fit the school in question under each of the major organisation characteristics. Furthermore it is possible to show discrepancies between, for example, the perceptions of the principal and the staff, or between staff and students. In Coombe Lodge Information Paper 1849 the original management questionnaires are shown in use in an English College of Further Education (Turner 1983). The profile chart derived from the adapted questionnaires for schools is as follows. (A profile is plotted as an example of use).

Likert School Profile Indices



The profile given as an example suggests that this school is operating mostly in System 2. System 1 scores on the columns 1 and 2, System 2 on columns 3 and 4, System 3 on columns 56, and System 4 on columns 7 and 8.

The difficulty with Likert's work is that it is a catch-all analysis of the organisation and it is difficult to distinguish which parts are really about climate as distinct from management systems. It certainly tells us something about the school investigated and can do it from the perspectives of several people, but it does not help us understand better what organisational climate is and what it is derived from.

The Relationship of Organisational Climate to Organisational Effectiveness in Schools

We have already discussed the problem of this relationship in the main part of the paper. Here we report on three pieces of research.

One investigation on a large sample in Michigan defined climate as the norms and expectations of the members of the school and from that developed a measurement they entitled the S.A.S. or Student Sense of Academic Futility (Brookover et al 1978). They used as independent variables, the socio-economic status of the pupils and their racial composition. Their findings were that the largest variation in achievement levels came from the S.A.S. The researchers argued that this was a measure of the social climate of the school, since it was derived from its set of norms and expectations. Whether this is a reasonable definition of climate is an open question but it may well be a very productive line for future research.

A second relevant research study was conducted in twelve inner-London Schools. (Rutter et al, 1979). Outcomes were measured by student behaviour, student attendance, and public examinations. The study showed wide differences in output between the schools, and these could not be explained by socio-economic status, ethnic origin, physical state of the buildings, or administrative and structural arrangements. The researchers concluded that "outcomes were systematically related to their characteristics as social institutions". The key parts of this, which are capable of modification by the staff and are not fixed external constraints were:

1. The behaviour of teachers at work

2. The emphasis placed on academic performance

3. Provision for students to be rewarded for succeeding

4. Extent to which students could take responsibility

Thus they define climate (though they call it ethos) as those parts of the school experience which are open to manipulation or variation - a different and more teacher centred definition than that of Brookover. In a sense however the research is self validating. Schools get the best output if they concentrate on getting the best output. A third research study was conducted by Moos involving some 10,000 secondary students and 500 classrooms in schools in the United States (Moos, 1979) He used as dependent variables measures of absence rate, grades, student satisfaction with their learning and with their teachers. A similar approach was used with 225 college groups involving 10,000 students. He took measures of climate such as stress on competition, emphasis on intellectuality, emphasis on rules, group unity, supportive activity of teachers, extent of innovative activities, and social activities. The general conclusion of this research was that student performance was strongly influenced by the nature and quality of the person-environment interaction. This of course is commonly accepted by teachers as a truism, and it would have been very surprising if a reverse conclusion had been reached. However Moos' work does isolate one or two particularly important independent variables, and its most important message is that the environment that seems to affect student performance is under the control of and therefore manipulable by the staff of schools and colleges. Moos also reinforces Barker's argument that room design and layout of buildings has an important effect on organisational climate.

To summarise, there is some research that demonstrates a connection between performance and various aspects of school or college behaviour and organisation. Whether the measures that have been isolated are measuring climate or something else such as style, the quality of interpersonal relations, or job satisfaction remains an open question. What is clearly established is that differences in performance can be more readily atrributed to the organisation itself than the nature of the student membership.

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